

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2012 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**  
**A Public School - 12NC5**

School Type (Public Schools):    ☐ Charter    ☒ Title 1    ☐ Magnet    ☐ Choice  
(Check all that apply, if any)

Name of Principal: Mrs. Ronette Dill

Official School Name: Saluda Elementary School

School Mailing Address:    214 East Main Street  
   Saluda, NC 28773-7819

County: Polk County                      State School Code Number\*: 750320

Telephone: (828) 749-5571    E-mail: rdill@polk.k12.nc.us

Fax: (828) 749-1106                      Web site/URL: http://sal.polkschools.org/

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\*: Mr. William J. Miller    Superintendent e-mail: bmiller@polkschools.org

District Name: Polk County Schools    District Phone: (828) 894-3051

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mr. Geoffrey Tennant

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

*\*Non-Public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

## PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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12NC5

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2011-2012 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take foreign language courses.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2006.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 or 2011.
7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

12NC5

All data are the most recent year available.

### DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district 4 Elementary schools (includes K-8)  
(per district designation): 1 Middle/Junior high schools  
2 High schools  
0 K-12 schools  
7 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 2527

### SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Small city or town in a rural area
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 6
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2011 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total			# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	7	11	18		6	0	0	0
K	10	8	18		7	0	0	0
1	18	13	31		8	0	0	0
2	3	11	14		9	0	0	0
3	13	10	23		10	0	0	0
4	12	15	27		11	0	0	0
5	14	6	20		12	0	0	0
Total in Applying School:								151

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native  
0 % Asian  
0 % Black or African American  
7 % Hispanic or Latino  
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
86 % White  
7 % Two or more races  
100 % Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2010-2011 school year: 7%  
 This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred <b>to</b> the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	10
(2)	Number of students who transferred <b>from</b> the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	1
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	11
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2010	151
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.07
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	7

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 2%  
 Total number of ELL students in the school: 3  
 Number of non-English languages represented: 1  
 Specify non-English languages:

Spanish

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 58%

Total number of students who qualify: 100

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 12%

Total number of students served: 19

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>1</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>7</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>5</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>5</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>1</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>8</u>	<u>0</u>
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
Total number	<u>19</u>	<u>10</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1: 19:1

13. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Daily student attendance	97%	96%	97%	96%	95%
High school graduation rate	%	%	%	%	%

14. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools):**

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2011 are doing as of Fall 2011.

Graduating class size:	_____
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	_____ %
Enrolled in a community college	_____ %
Enrolled in vocational training	_____ %
Found employment	_____ %
Military service	_____ %
Other	_____ %
<b>Total</b>	<b>_____ 0%</b>

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award:

☒ No

☐ Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award?

The history of Saluda Elementary can be traced back to 1922. During that year, the Saluda Seminary closed as a private institution and the school became part of the public school system in Polk County, North Carolina. Today, Saluda Elementary School is an inviting PreK-5 public school located in the rural western North Carolina city of Saluda. The school is within walking distance of small businesses in Saluda's Historic Downtown District. Saluda Elementary School is one of only forty-two schools in the North Carolina A+ Schools Program. These A+ Schools cover the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and new Common Core Standards and North Carolina Essential Standards through interdisciplinary thematic units, combined with arts integration and hands-on, experiential learning, including daily arts instruction by certified arts teachers. The faculty and staff are dedicated and experienced professionals striving to fulfill the mission of our school.

The mission of Saluda Elementary School, in union with family and community, is to equip and motivate each student to participate responsibly in a diverse and challenging global society, while inspired to continue to mature intellectually, socially and emotionally. Our school, although small, is privileged to have the services of a full-time school counselor, media specialist, exceptional children's teacher, technology facilitator and Title I reading assistant. Fifteen is the average number of years of teaching experience attained by the teachers and administrator. Forty-three percent of our certified teachers hold advanced degrees and thirty-six percent are Nationally Board Certified teachers.

The school population is small (162 students) and socio-economically diverse. Approximately half of our students are from households below the middle income level. Fifty-nine percent of our students live with both birth/adoptive parents. Seventy-eight percent of parents have received education beyond high school. The fact that our school is a community-based school enables us to easily encourage high parent participation, community involvement and partnerships with various clubs and institutions in our area. The Parent-Teacher-Student-Organization (PTSO) supports the "Books Are Really Fun" program, which allows every student in grades PreK-5 to choose five free books each year. PTSO received matching grant funds from Modern Woodmen of the World, which was used to create and equip a science lab. The school's partnership with local churches has provided funding for four-five weeks of summer enrichment activities for fifty students (ages 5-11) for the past two summers. Volunteers from these churches also provide after school tutoring two afternoons each week in the school's After School Academy. Monetary support from the community also helps our school to provide a free, developmentally appropriate, hardback book from Dolly Parton's Imagination Library each month to children (birth-age 5) living in the Saluda community. Saluda Elementary School's consistent focus on arts-integration, collaborative planning and community involvement; coupled with our strong desire to provide meaningful, educational experiences for students has created a positive and successful learning environment for all stakeholders.

### 1. Assessment Results:

Since North Carolina's legislature and State Board of Education's implementation of the ABCs (Accountability, mastery of Basic skills, local Control) of Public Education, our school has obtained the following awards and achievements based on North Carolina's End-of-Grade Tests: Top 25 School in Academic Growth 1996, School of Distinction 1997-2000, School of Excellence 2001-2003, Honor School of Excellence 2003-2005 and School of Distinction 2006-2008. For the 2008-2009, 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years, Saluda Elementary received the designation of Honor School of Excellence.

As a School of Distinction, 80%-90% of all students perform at or above grade level. As a School of Excellence, at least 90% of all student perform at or above grade level. As an Honor School of Excellence, at least 90% of students perform at or above grade level and the school meets adequate yearly progress performance targets. Only 5-8% of North Carolina schools received this designation between 2008 and 2011.

All students in grades 3-5 are assessed each year in reading and math using North Carolina's End-of-Grade Tests. These tests are aligned to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS) and student scores reflect how well students have mastered the grade level objectives outlined in the NCSCOS. The tests are used for student performance standards, to gauge school performance under the state's accountability models and for No Child Left Behind standards of Adequately Yearly Progress. The performance standard indicates the percentage of students at or above grade level in reading and math. Student performance on the end-of-grade assessments is classified as being in Achievement Levels I, II, III or IV. Level I students do not have sufficient mastery of knowledge and skill in the subject area to be successful at the next grade level. Level II students demonstrate inconsistent mastery of knowledge and skills in this subject area and are minimally prepared to be successful at the next grade level. In order to be considered proficient or above, students must earn Achievement Level III or IV ratings. These levels of performance indicate that a student is prepared for school work at the next grade level. Eighty percent or more of our students have consistently scored Achievement Level III or IV ratings, since North Carolina implemented the ABCs of Public Education.

### 2. Using Assessment Results:

The faculty/staff of Saluda Elementary School uses data obtained from a variety of assessments, including the North Carolina End-of-Grade tests of math and reading, to plan for student academic and school performance improvement. In addition to the EOG tests, every student in grades K-5 is assessed three times per year in the area of reading using Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). This assessment is the primary tool used to identify at-risk students for participation in the Title I reading program. The Title I program serves students in grades 1-5. Teachers in grades 1-5 use the Star Reading computer-based assessment tool each grading period to determine individual student reading levels. Teachers in grades K-2 use the North Carolina K-2 Assessments to document student progress in language arts and math. Students in grades 3-5 complete Study Island's benchmark tests in reading and math four times per year. The Study Island benchmark tests are aligned to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study goals and objectives for each grade level. Teacher-generated assessment data is used to show academic progress for all subject areas and is documented every three weeks on interim reports and each six weeks on report cards for students in grades K-5. Analyzing the above assessment results/data before school starts each year, allows our school community to create appropriate School Improvement Goals and Objectives and determine individual student strengths and weaknesses. Using this data, teachers are able to determine, within the first six weeks of school, students in need of enrichment opportunities or remediation services. Enrichment opportunities are provided for students in the academically-gifted program and through the guest artist portion of the A+ Schools Program. Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are written and reviewed each six weeks for K-5 at-risk students. These plans list



learning strategies, for individual students, which are to be addressed by classroom teachers to guide academic instruction. Remediation tutoring services, for reading and math, are provided by certified teachers each morning for students in grades 1-5. The school principal reviews all assessment data and conducts individual conferences with students and teachers throughout the school year to point out areas of improvement and to encourage continued academic efforts.

### **3. Sharing Lessons Learned:**

Saluda Elementary School has the opportunity to share best practices and successes with other schools in our county and throughout the state. Within Polk County, teachers share their expertise by serving on various committees, such as curriculum, calendar, health advisory and policy planning. Saluda's technology facilitator helps teachers create and maintain individual classroom links on the school web site. The school principal forwards pictures and articles to local newspapers to share school successes with the community. Copies of these pictures and articles are prominently displayed in the main entryway of the school. Other schools have requested and are welcome to visit/tour our school to learn more about the North Carolina A+ Schools Program.

Principals and certified teachers have visited our school to observe and discuss how to better use curriculum integration at their own schools. Elementary schools within Polk County are invited to attend special guest artist performances in our auditorium. Our school has hosted student teachers from the teacher assistant program at Blue Ridge Community College; counseling and physical education interns from Western Carolina University; and elementary education and physical education interns from Mars Hill College. Saluda teachers have facilitated workshops, such as 'Vocabulary and Literacy Centers' for faculty/staff and 'Healthful Holiday Hints' for parent meetings. Teachers have also presented at the state level for the NC A+ Schools Program. The school counselor presented 'Integrating Counseling Into Regular Classroom Instruction With An A+ Emphasis.' The physical education/dance teacher and the music teacher presented 'Integrating Math in the A+ Classroom.' Two teachers attended "Train-the-Trainer" workshops and then trained second and fifth grade teachers across the county to implement "Partners for Mathematics Learning" for daily math instruction. Currently, all faculty and staff members are participating in Reading Foundations training, which has allowed Saluda's teachers the opportunity to share best practices in reading with teachers from another elementary school in Polk County.

### **4. Engaging Families and Communities:**

Two projects that have proven to be most successful in working with family and community members for student success at Saluda Elementary School are the Family Fun Nights and the Super Sizzlin' Summer Adventures program. Once each month, students, parents and other family members are invited to school for food and fun! Participation rates on these nights have ranged from 40-90% of our student enrollment. The first Family Fun Night was held in September 2010. Families participated in a Literacy Scavenger Hunt, walking from the school to the Saluda Community Library downtown. At the library, families were given a tour and encouraged to sign up for public library cards. Families were then treated to pizza, drinks and cookies provided by funds from the Polk County Public Library. Family Fun Night in March 2011 was held on St. Patrick's Day. Families were encouraged to wear green for the Go Green! environmental-themed evening. The gymnasium was filled with families rotating between stations set up to help participants understand the importance of protecting our earth. Green foods, such as broccoli, kiwi, grapes, celery and apples, provided a welcome snack at the end of the evening.

The other project that has been very successful began with a grant from the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina. This \$2,000 grant provided funds to hold the first Super Sizzlin' Summer Adventures five-week enrichment program in 2010. Community churches provided breakfasts and lunches for 50+ students each day. Community volunteers provided daily enrichment activities, such as Safe Hiking Tips, Introductions to Search & Rescue Dogs, Miniature Horses as Seeing-Eye-Dogs, Etiquette, Sewing, Cooking with Eggs, Water Safety for Kayaking, Puppetry and many more activities. Students read or were read to daily and each student kept a daily journal of their favorite activities. This

program was so successful, that even without grant funding for the summer of 2011, the community worked together to secure the monetary support needed and provided four weeks of Super Sizzlin' Summer Adventures again in 2011 for 50+ children in the Saluda community. Thanks to the SSS Adventures program, many of the community volunteers, who are retirees, are now currently involved as afternoon tutors during After School Academy at Saluda Elementary School.

## 1. Curriculum:

Saluda Elementary School is transitioning from the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS) to the Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics and the North Carolina Essential Standards for all other subject areas. Our faculty/staff is dedicated and committed to helping students learn curriculum objectives through core (language arts, math, science and social studies) and encore (technology, music, visual arts, physical education/dance, and media) integrated learning opportunities that address multiple intelligences and learning styles. Language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, healthful living, computer/technology, art, music, physical education and information skills are the content areas included in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study for elementary schools.

Language arts is taught using a balanced approach. The mathematics curriculum is supplemented with hands-on manipulatives, Mountain Math, Math Super Stars and Weekly Essentials. Teachers also use Orchard, Study Island and i-Ready technology programs to reinforce and individualize instruction. The use of FOSS Science kits provide inquiry based, hands-on units of study aligned with the curriculum. Teachers use a variety of literary sources and guest speakers from World View and the community to supplement social studies texts in order to provide engaging, global experiences for students. Visual arts, music, physical education/dance, technology and media teachers collaborate with classroom teachers to integrate the arts with all academic disciplines. All PreK-5 students attend visual arts, media and music classes weekly.

Core and "Encore" teachers participate in monthly collaborative planning sessions to discuss key concepts and vocabulary for curriculum integration. Teachers also incorporate learning activities which address the multiple intelligences and learning styles into each integrated unit of study.

Students use the technology lab, which is equipped with desktop computers and a Promethean Board, during scheduled periods each week. The computer lab schedule also includes flexible access time for students and teachers to conduct research and prepare presentations.

Every K-5 student participates in a 30-minute daily physical education/dance class, where healthful living objectives are also addressed. The conscious and consistent effort, of the faculty/staff at Saluda Elementary School, to integrate the arts into the core curriculum continues to be successful in that it creates the necessary connections which ensure understanding and academic success for every student.

## 2. Reading/English:

Saluda Elementary School uses a research-based balanced approach to teaching reading. Students are taught the reading curriculum through multiple methods, which includes the use of phonics and vocabulary instruction, guided reading, Junior Great Books, Thinking Maps, supplemental and basal texts, leveled trade books, teacher read-alouds, daily "Book Clubs" and computer-assisted programs, such as i-Ready, Orchard, Accelerated Reader and Study Island. Students are immersed in a print-rich environment. Encore teachers use many print resources in their classrooms to emphasize the importance of reading and communication. Instructional attention to phonics, oral reading fluency, and comprehension are taught early on and reinforced in the later grades. Comprehension strategies are modeled and practiced over time until students can apply the strategy across different genres and in different situations.

Every K-2 and 3-5 student participates in daily 30-minute "Book Clubs" to target specific reading skills. These small leveled reading groups are led by core teachers, encore teachers and teaching assistants.

Groups change each six weeks based on reading assessments, such as Star Reading, DIBELS and K-2 Literacy Assessments. As a community of readers, each student is required to read aloud nightly at home. The required nightly reading gives students an opportunity to practice reading strategies and skills to improve their reading comprehension and fluency. For those students who are reading below grade-level expectancy, individualized reading instruction is used to target specific learning goals using i-Ready. To help meet the needs of our students, volunteers and tutors are available to read one-on-one with students during the school day and in After School Academy. Many of these students also receive assistance through the Title I Program, which gives students in grades 1-5 small group instruction for thirty minutes each day to learn and reinforce the skills necessary for them to become successful readers. Enrichment programs, such as Junior Great Books and special interest projects are provided to increase enjoyment and interest in reading. These enrichment programs are provided by the Media Specialist, who is also an Academically Gifted certified teacher. PreK-5 students have the opportunity to visit the media center twice each week. Recent additions to our media collection include \$10,000 worth of new books (fiction texts paired with nonfiction texts) from an LSTA Grant.

Also, to encourage male students to read more, the media specialist has added numerous nonfiction books that are specifically appealing to boys. Every year our school holds a weekly Read-a-Thon to celebrate reading and to encourage families to read more with their children at home. Former Saluda students, now in high school and college, serve as guest readers during that week. These guests not only read aloud in classrooms, they also stress the importance of reading in their studies and professions. Another way that older students mentor younger students in reading is through Book Buddies. Fifth grade students 'buddy' up with students from kindergarten to participate in weekly read aloud sessions. The success of these weekly sessions is evident as the kindergarten students build their reading confidence and as friendships grow between the older and younger students.

### **3. Mathematics:**

Currently, K-2 teachers are following the Common Core Standards for Mathematics as their individual grade level curriculum. Teachers of students in grades 3-5 will continue to follow the North Carolina Standard Course of Study this year and will begin transitioning to the Common Core Standards for Mathematics as soon as state assessments are aligned to the new curriculum.

Mathematics instruction at Saluda Elementary focuses on the strategies presented during a three-year involvement with Partners for Mathematics Learning professional development sessions. The Partners for Mathematics Learning project was directed by Jeane M. Joyner in conjunction with Public Schools of North Carolina and Meredith College. Teachers and teaching assistants gained valuable knowledge, such as knowing conventions and correct terms for math concepts; knowing how to carry through standard procedures; understanding the meaning of mathematics concepts and how they relate to each other; using knowledge to reason and solve problems; being able to approach problems and use techniques and strategies to solve problems; and becoming more confident, creative, cooperative, committed, and able to work as a team.

Participating in this process for mathematics learning has enhanced mathematics instruction at our school.

Every classroom teacher uses hands-on manipulatives for math instruction. Students are expected to explain, describe, and create ways to solve mathematical problems. Teachers have increased their questioning to require students to "prove" their answers, either aloud or in writing. Efforts to improve skills of those who are performing below grade level are provided using a variety of methods and materials.

One-on-one or small group tutoring is used to help develop math skills in those who are performing below grade level. The school counselor is also a certified math teacher and she provides additional math assistance for students. Also, computer programs, such as i-Ready and Study Island, give students opportunities to improve their mathematical skills. Classroom teachers accelerate mathematics instruction for students who are performing above grade level. For example, three second grade students

received individualized instruction on third grade math concepts in their classroom to meet their individual learning needs. The keys to success in mathematics for students at Saluda Elementary are that teachers know their curriculum; teachers know the math to be taught and learned; and most importantly, the teachers know their students.

#### **4. Additional Curriculum Area:**

Saluda Elementary believes that technology is a valuable learning tool for students. Our school has a commitment to use technology whenever it is appropriate to create meaningful and authentic learning experiences for children. This belief and commitment are reflected in the inclusion of technology in our school vision statement and the formal technology planning process that has driven our curriculum, personnel, and budget decisions during the past seven years. Following a five-year technology plan (aligned with county and state-level technology plans) helped us to meet our goals from the recent plan cycle in all areas.

We have developed a comprehensive continuum of technology skills for grades K-5; added a staff position to facilitate technology support, planning and instruction; provided for teacher and student access to the computer network and internet from every classroom; and built a school wide television network with cable programming and local broadcast capabilities. Through a lease program, our school is able to purchase new computers for the technology lab every five years. The "old" lab computers are then distributed to individual classrooms. Every classroom has at least three computers for student use.

Classroom teachers were allowed to choose between Promethean Boards or document cameras, projectors & laptops for their classrooms. Currently, every classroom, including After School Academy, has either a Promethean Board or the alternative technology set-up. Saluda students have used digital still, video cameras, word processing, and desktop publishing to develop writing skills. Teachers and students have access to digital voice recorders and flip cameras for classroom projects. We use digital video editing to create news and announcement programs as well as arts-enriched projects like video reports and book reviews that are shared on the video network. Students participate in a daily, live morning news show with the principal that is shared on the video network with the entire student body.

Teachers create and maintain websites and have been trained to use this resource not just for regular communication with students and their families, but to provide educational resources that support and enhance the curriculum which can be accessed anytime, anyplace. Teachers use networked software and online resources to assess students at all phases of the learning process, plan and implement more effective delivery of all curriculum areas, provide student interaction with skills and information, conduct research, and allow students to be creative and productive as they share their learning through technology.

#### **5. Instructional Methods:**

Integration of the arts into the curriculum allows students to be taught the way they learn best. It is the belief of the Saluda Elementary staff that students learn best when they experience things for themselves. As a result, teachers adapt instructional methods to meet the needs of all students by implementing the multiple intelligences and knowing the different learning styles of each child and teaching to those styles. All faculty members have had training on current brain research and integrating the intelligences into the curriculum. By staying current on the research of best practices, teachers are able to teach the way that the students learn best. Physical experiences, such as dance and movement activities, are a part of everyday teaching methods to improve instruction for all learners. Hands-on activities, such as the implementation of Science FOSS kits, Partners for Mathematics Learning activities, and strategies from Reading Foundations training allow all children to be engaged and experience learning.

Teachers model through the use of think-alouds, role-play, and visual aides, such as graphic organizers and charts, to strengthen understanding of concepts. All students benefit from the enrichment programs we provide that correlate with our curriculum and include guest speakers, performers, and visiting artists.

Several guest artists-in-residency have used creative movement, storytelling, and drumming to improve student's detail and elaboration in writing.

This year, Saluda received a grant from the NC Arts Council, which allowed every student in our school the opportunity to create puppets or write a song with artists-in-residency, Timmy and Susana Abell. By collaborating as a school community on instructional methods, students are able to relate concepts to other situations and make real-world applications and connections. To meet individual student needs, all teachers modify and differentiate the curriculum as needed. Small-group tutoring is offered before and after school. Tutoring is led by certified teachers, who find different ways to teach the same concepts, so that all students can experience success with grade level goals and objectives.

## **6. Professional Development:**

Professional development at Saluda Elementary School is the key to our success. As part of the NC A+ Schools Program, our school incorporates substantive and ongoing staff development. There are five levels of professional development that have a significant impact on student learning: individual, school, county, region and state. Individually, teachers work with the principal to create yearly Professional Development Plans (PDPs).

In order to impact student learning, the goals and strategies of each teacher's PDP are directly aligned to the goals and objectives of the School Improvement Plan and the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation Instrument. At the school level, professional development activities are chosen based on the needs of our students. Each summer, during our site-based summer A+ institute, the faculty/staff choose a focus area.

This year, our focus is on reading. Every K-5 certified teacher and teaching assistant has participated in thirty hours of training in Reading Foundations. Faculty and staff members are implementing the strategies from these training sessions in their daily "Book Clubs" with students. Instructional funds are being used to purchase additional sets of leveled fiction and nonfiction texts to increase the size of our literacy library. The principal will attend the North Carolina Reading Conference to gather updated information regarding the English Language Arts Common Core Standards, recent literacy research and ideas for parental involvement. The principal will share information from that conference with all interested teachers in Polk County.

Teachers at Saluda also have opportunities to work with guest artists, as part of the NC A+ Schools Program, to learn ways to integrate various artistic styles into the Common Core Standards, NC Essential Standards and the NC Standard Course of Study. Monthly collaborative planning times are scheduled for K-5 core teachers to meet with encore (art, music, media, etc) teachers to review and emphasize specific areas of need for focused instruction. This time allows core and encore teachers to purposefully plan for instructional two-way integration. At the county level, professional development opportunities are scheduled for faculty/staff required workdays and half-day releases.

Examples of ongoing county staff development series have included McREL's Research into Practice 'Classroom Instruction That Works,' Partners for Mathematics Learning and Reading Foundations.

Regionally, teachers receive support through professional development sessions offered by the Western Regional Education Service Alliance. The principal and A+ coordinators attend regional meetings twice a year to share best practices and plan for statewide conferences with other NC A+ Schools.

## **7. School Leadership:**

The leadership responsibilities at Saluda Elementary School are managed by the school principal. The PreK-5 school does not have assistant principals or lead teachers. The principal's philosophy on leadership is that "we are all professional educators" and that "programs do not change kids-relationships do." The principal stresses the importance of establishing relationships and celebrating individuality.

Teachers are reminded to first build relationships with students and provide a learning environment where each child feels safe to take chances and make mistakes in order to grow academically, socially and emotionally.

As the school's instructional leader, the principal has the responsibility of creating that same type of environment for the faculty and staff. Teachers should feel secure enough to take chances, to make mistakes and in turn to grow professionally. Teachers are to be educational experts and the principal expects to see evidence of their expertise daily in classrooms.

Meeting the needs of each individual student is the top priority of everything that goes on at Saluda Elementary School. High expectations of the principal for staff and students sets the stage for success. Before the school year begins for students, the school principal facilitates the review, revision and creation of a new School Improvement Plan, which is aligned with the state and district strategic priorities. By reviewing the previous year's testing data and surveys completed by students, parents, staff and community members and by examining the NC Teacher Working Conditions Survey, faculty and staff are able to clearly pinpoint areas where improvement is needed. Each teacher then creates his/her individual professional development plan and yearly plan for instruction based on the school's goals for improvement. The educational experts (teachers) at Saluda Elementary School are allowed to choose and use the most appropriate academic activities and texts to address their curricular standards and to meet individual student needs. The principal reviews assessment data each six week grading period to monitor student progress and assists teachers in planning remediation and/or enrichment services for students.

Throughout the year, the principal reviews graded student work samples and conducts individual student conferences to point out areas of improvement and to encourage continued academic efforts.

Last, but not least, the principal of the school makes certain that high quality communications are used consistently schoolwide. Teachers receive weekly email memos from the principal and participate in monthly collaborative planning sessions and faculty meetings to help the school stay focused on student achievement throughout the school year. Students take home bright yellow communication folders, which serve as a powerful communication link between the school and parents, daily. The folders hold nightly reading logs, behavior logs, monthly information updates from the principal, graded student work, interim reports and report cards. This communication folder ensures that parents are kept well-informed.

## PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

### STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 3 Test: End-of-Grade

Edition/Publication Year: Updated annually Publisher: NCDPI

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	85	84	97	85	96
Level IV	31	26	47	44	46
Number of students tested	26	19	36	27	24
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	2	3	4	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	10	8	15	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	95		87	83	95
Level IV					
Number of students tested	13	7	15	12	11
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested		5	5	9	5
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. White</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	95	94	95	88	95
Level IV					
Number of students tested	23	18	32	24	23
<b>NOTES:</b> NC does not publicly report subgroup performance if the group contains less than 5 students. This influences the subgroup reporting ability for Saluda School. With a small student enrollment and very small subgroup populations, most subgroup performance can not be accurately reported for the school. NC also does not publicly report percentages of students scoring proficient over 95%. Since Saluda is a very high performing elementary school, most of the 95% proficient entries in the table could accurately be reported as a value greater than 95%.					

12NC5



# STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 3 Test: End-of-Grade

Edition/Publication Year: Updated annually Publisher: NCDPI

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	85	95	88	82	92
Level IV	31	21	50	30	79
Number of students tested	26	19	36	27	24
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	2	3	5	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	10	8	18	0
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	85		67	58	82
Level IV					
Number of students tested	13	7	15	12	11
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested		5	5	9	5
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. White</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	87	95	88	71	91
Level IV					
Number of students tested	23	18	32	24	23
<b>NOTES:</b>					
NC does not publicly report subgroup performance if the group contains less than 5 students. This influences the subgroup reporting ability for Saluda School. With a small student enrollment and very small subgroup populations, most subgroup performance cannot be accurately reported for the school. NC also does not publicly report percentages of students scoring proficient over 95%. Since Saluda is a very high performing elementary school, most of the 95% proficient entries in the table could accurately be reported as a value greater than 95%.					

12NC5

# STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 4 Test: End-of-Grade

Edition/Publication Year: Updated annually Publisher: NCDPI

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	100	97	95	81	83
Level IV	26	70	50	50	29
Number of students tested	19	33	25	27	25
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	3	4	3	1	1
Percent of students alternatively assessed	16	12	12	4	4
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV		93	92	85	93
Level IV					
Number of students tested	9	14	13	13	14
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested		6	6	5	6
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. White</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	95	95	95	81	84
Level IV					
Number of students tested	18	30	21	26	25
<b>NOTES:</b>					
NC does not publicly report subgroup performance if the group contains less than 5 students. This influences the subgroup reporting ability for Saluda School. With a small student enrollment and very small subgroup populations, most subgroup performance cannot be accurately reported for the school. NC also does not publicly report percentages of students scoring proficient over 95%. Since Saluda is a very high performing elementary school, most of the 95% proficient entries in the table could accurately be reported as a value greater than 95%.					

12NC5

# STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 4 Test: End-of-Grade

Edition/Publication Year: Updated annually Publisher: NCDPI

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	84	85	90	92	95
Level IV	10	52	40	50	76
Number of students tested	19	33	25	27	25
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	3	4	5	1	4
Percent of students alternatively assessed	16	12	20	14	16
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV		79	92	86	82
Level IV					
Number of students tested	9	14	13	14	11
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested		6	6	5	5
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. White</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	89	93	91	92	91
Level IV					
Number of students tested	18	30	21	26	23
<b>NOTES:</b>					
<p>NC does not publicly report subgroup performance if the group contains less than 5 students. This influences the subgroup reporting ability for Saluda School. With a small student enrollment and very small subgroup populations, most subgroup performance cannot be accurately reported for the school. NC also does not publicly report percentages of students scoring proficient over 95%. Since Saluda is a very high performing elementary school, most of the 95% proficient entries in the table could accurately be reported as a value greater than 95%.</p>					

12NC5

# STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 5 Test: End-of-Grade

Edition/Publication Year: Updated annually Publisher: NCDPI

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	100	88	97	91	84
Level IV	65	44	46	45	26
Number of students tested	31	25	26	22	31
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	3	4	1	4	3
Percent of students alternatively assessed	10	16	4	18	10
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	95	92	95		77
Level IV					
Number of students tested	12	12	15	8	13
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested	5	6	5	5	
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. White</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	95	95	95	91	90
Level IV					
Number of students tested	29	22	25	22	30
<b>NOTES:</b>					
NC does not publicly report subgroup performance if the group contains less than 5 students. This influences the subgroup reporting ability for Saluda School. With a small student enrollment and very small subgroup populations, most subgroup performance cannot be accurately reported for the school. NC also does not publicly report percentages of students scoring proficient over 95%. Since Saluda is a very high performing elementary school, most of the 95% proficient entries in the table could accurately be reported as a value greater than 95%.					

12NC5

# STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 5 Test: End-of-Grade

Edition/Publication Year: Updated annually Publisher: NCDPI

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	84	96	92	82	93
Level IV	35	24	32	35	56
Number of students tested	31	25	26	21	30
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	95	97
Number of students alternatively assessed	3	6	1	5	3
Percent of students alternatively assessed	9	24	4	24	10
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	83	95	93		92
Level IV					
Number of students tested	12	12	15	8	13
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested	5	6	5	5	
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV					
Level IV					
Number of students tested					
<b>6. White</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	90	95	95	73	95
Level IV					
Number of students tested	29	22	25	22	30
<b>NOTES:</b>					
NC does not publicly report subgroup performance if the group contains less than 5 students. This influences the subgroup reporting ability for Saluda School. With a small student enrollment and very small subgroup populations, most subgroup performance cannot be accurately reported for the school. NC also does not publicly report percentages of students scoring proficient over 95%. Since Saluda is a very high performing elementary school, most of the 95% proficient entries in the table could accurately be reported as a value greater than 95%.					

12NC5

# STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics      Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month					
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	94	90	96	85	87
Level IV	43	50	47	46	32
Number of students tested	76	77	87	76	80
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	6	10	7	9	4
Percent of students alternatively assessed	8	12	8	12	4
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	95	91	91	86	88
Level IV	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	34	33	43	33	38
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	0	0	0	0	0
Level IV	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	0	0	0	0	0
Level IV	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV		82	85	68	54
Level IV		0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	5	17	16	19	11
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	0	0	0	0	0
Level IV	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
<b>6.</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	95	94	95	86	89
Level IV	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	70	70	78	72	78
<b>NOTES:</b>					

12NC5

# STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month					
<b>SCHOOL SCORES</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	84	91	89	85	93
Level IV	27	35	41	38	69
Number of students tested	76	77	87	75	79
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	98	99
Number of students alternatively assessed	6	12	9	11	7
Percent of students alternatively assessed	8	15	10	18	8
<b>SUBGROUP SCORES</b>					
<b>1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	85	88	83	70	85
Level IV	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	34	33	43	34	35
<b>2. African American Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	0	0	0	0	0
Level IV	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
<b>3. Hispanic or Latino Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	0	0	0	0	0
Level IV	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
<b>4. Special Education Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV		85	67	58	80
Level IV		0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	5	17	16	19	10
<b>5. English Language Learner Students</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	0	0	0	0	0
Level IV	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
<b>6.</b>					
Level III plus Level IV	88	94	91	79	92
Level IV	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	70	70	78	72	76
<b>NOTES:</b>					

12NC5